

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETEL YO

SUBJ: SARAJEVO RADIO ISSUE DURING USIA DEPUTY

DIRECTOR KOPP'S VISIT

REF: BELGRADE 0410

1. AS INDICATED REFTEL, AFN-RADIO SARAJEVO (RS) INTERFERENCE WAS A PROMINENT TOPIC IN MOST OF THE CALLS MADE BY AMB TOON AND USIA DEPT. DIR. KOPP ON B-H REPUBLIC AND FEDERAL OFFICIALS.

2. IN MEETING WITH B-H REPUBLIC SECINFO ZIVKO BABIC, ISSUE OF AFN INTERFERENCE WAS LED INTO WHEN MR. KOPP WELCOMED ADDITIONAL MEDIA CORRESPONDENTS FROM B-H TO US WHERE USIA COULD HELP FACILITATE THEIR WORK. BABIC REPLIED THAT CORRESPONDENTS ARE IN "REVOLT" OVER AFN-RS ISSUE, IMPLYING THEY WOULDN'T ACCEPT ASSIGNMENT IN US OR USIA HELP. MORE URGENTLY, BABIC SAID, WAS NEED FOR ASSURANCE THAT PROBLEM BEING WORKED ON, AND HOPED PROBLEM WILL BE SOLVED. KOPP INDICATED EFFORTS WERE UNDERWAY TO RELIEVE INTERFERENCE; AMB. ADDED
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THAT REPRESENTATIONS SHOULD BE MADE IN OTHER CAPITALS

FOR THEIR INTERFERENCE WITH RS. BABIC CITED COMPLEXITY OF PROBLEMS RADIO ISSUE HAS CAUSED REPUBLIC, WHICH HAS TAKEN ALL NECESSARY MEASURES TO BRING PROBLEM TO FEDERAL LEVEL FOR RESOLUTION. HE ALSO SAID THAT APART FROM ROLE OF RADIO AS MEANS TO DEVELOP "GLOBAL COOPERATION", RESOLVING INTERFERENCE PROBLEM WOULD BE "SOLID SIGN OF YUGOSLAV SOVEREIGNTY."

3. IN MEETING WITH MILAN SKORO, VP/B-H EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, 23 JAN., AMB. AND KOPP WERE TOLD OF PROBLEM B-H GOVT HAS HAD OFVER AFN INTERFERENCE ISSUE. HE ASKED USG TO DO ITS BEST TO SOLVE PROBLEM, ACKNOWLEDGING THAT OTHER STATIONS WERE ALSO INTERFERING WITH RADIO SARAJEVO BUT SAID AFN IS MAIN ONE NOW. SKORO CITED IMPORTANCE OF GETTING INFORMATION TO RS LISTENERS BOTH WITHIN COUNTRY AND ABROAD. HE SAID BEST SOLUTION WOULD BE CESSATION OF AFN TRANSMISSIONS ON 611 FREQ BUT RECOGNIZED NEED FOR US SOLDIERS TO BE INFORMED BY THEIR OWN RADIO. HOWEVER, HE CLAIMED AFN CAME ON SAME FREQ AFTER SARAJEVO. BAM REPLIED AFN SIGNAL STRENGTH HAD ALREADY BEEN REDUCED AND THAT INTERFERENCE WITHIN YUGOSLAVIA REDUCED SIGNIFICANTLY. ALTHOUGH NOT RESOLVED, SITUATION ALLEVIATED AND US WORKING CLOSELY WITH YUGOSLAV AUTHORITIES TO ELIMINATE INTERFERENCE WITHIN YUGOSLAVIA. AMB ALSO CITED OTHER SOURCES OF INTERFERENCE WITH RS AND FACT US WAS ENGAGED IN JOINT EFFORT TO DETERMINE SOURCE OF MAJOR INTERFERENCE AND SAID US WILL CONTINUE SUCH COOPERATION.

4. PRESIDENT FED COMMITTEE FOR INFO TO FEC, MUHAMED BERBEROVIC, IN 1 1/2-HOUR MEETING WITH AMB AND KOPP JAN 24, ENUMERATED INTER-ALIA RADIO SARAJEVO-AFN PROBLEM AS ONE OF ELEMENTS THAT "SPOILED" GENERALLY GOOD STATE OF INFORMATION RELATIONS BETWEEN USG AND GOY. AMONG MANY POSSIBILITIES FOR FUTURE COOPERATION, BERBEROVIC INCLUDED AN END TO AFN INTERFERENCE ON RS, WHICH HAS BEEN GOING ON FOR "COUPLE OF YEARS" AND HAS CREATED DIFFICULT ATMOSPHERE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AS WELL AS DIFFICULT PRACTICAL PROBLEMS, WHICH WERE REASON FOR ADOPTION OF FEC DECISION TO "INTERVENE WITH US GOVERNMENT TO SOLVE PROBLEMS." HE RECALLED EARLIER TALKS WITH PAO CATHERMAN AND ASSISTANT DIRECTOR SHIRLEY ABOUT MATTER AND NOW IN TALKING WITH KOPP ASKED URGENT (AND EXPECT) POSITIVE SOLUTION. KOPP REPLY SAME AS AMB'S IN OTHER TALKS, VIS., AFN POWER REDUCED, CONTINUING INTERFERENCE

COMING FROM OTHER FOREIGN RADION, US COOPERATING WITH YUGOSLAVS IN TECHNICAL TESTS TO DETERMINE SOURCES OF OTHER INTERFERENCE AND CONFIDENT PROBLEM WILL BE SOLVED.

5. IN NEXT MEETING WITH ZIVAN BERISAVLJEVIC, FSFA ASST. SEC. FOR PRESS, INFO, CULTURE, SUBJECT LAUNCHED INTO IMMEDIATELY WITH STATEMENT THAT "POLITICAL FOG" (INSTEAD OF NATURAL FOG THAT NORMALLY ENSHROUNDS SARAJEVO) HAD TO BE DISPERSED TO MAKE SARAJEVO USIC OPENING POSSIBLE. DECISION TO OPEN CENTER (BELGRADE 0291) WAS COMPLICATED PROCEDURE SINCE GOY COMMITTED TO CENTER OPENING AND THERE WAS TROUBLE IN PERSUADING BOSNIANS, WHO KEEN TO RESOLVE INTERFERENCE TO RADIO SARAJEVO, THAT LEGALLY THERE COULD BE NO LINKAGE, BUT OBVIOUSLY POLITICAL LINKAGE IS POSSIBLE. HE NOTED IMPORTANCE OF BROADCASTS TO YUGOSLAV WORKERS IN FRG "IN PEACETIME AS WELL AS IN CRISIS." GOY WILL HAVE TO INSIST WITH OTHERS WHO INTERFERE WITH YUGOSLAV RADIO TO CEASE INTERFERENCE. THEREFORE, GOY HELP TO US IN OPENING CENTER WAS NOT DONE AS FAVOR TO US SO MUCH AS MEANS TO PAVE WAY TO FULFILLMENT OF LEGAL COMMITMENT. KOPP REPLIED THAT HE UNDERSTOOD SENSITIVITY OF RADIO ISSUE BUT WAS DISTURBED BY LINKAGE TO USIC OPENING TO WHICH HE HAD LOOKED FORWARD AS ANOTHER ELEMENT IN LONG AND CONTINUING INFO/CULTURAL RELATIONS. HE ADDED THAT HE WAS AWARE OF AND GRATEFUL FOR EFFORTS BY SECY BERISAVLJEVIC AND FSFA TO HAVE CENTER OPEN ON TIME. KOPP REPEATED SAME POINTS ABOVE PARAS RE US EFFORTS TO REDUCE INTERFERENCE. TOON

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